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24 October 1961

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BUNNY

SUBJECT: Differences among NATO Allies on Broad Strategy

1. Levels of Differences

At the risk of over-simplification, I would say that this Government is experiencing difficulties with its NATO Allies on three levels:

- a. The relatively pure-political question of when and how to negotiate what with the Soviet Union;
- b. The relatively pure-military question of achieving a meaningful and selective NATO-wide military build-up;
- c. The halfway-house question of broad NATO strategy (or "philosophy", as members of the North Atlantic Council often call it), which derives in part from the broader political question and which, in turn, provides the basis for derivation of the more specific military question.

2. Focus of This Memorandum

This memorandum will try to concentrate on the halfway-house level of differences because it is in this area that political and military considerations are so intermingled that neither the statesman nor the soldier is sure that they are his business.

3. 1961: Berlin and NATO Strategy

a. In connection with the Berlin crisis which the Soviets have created this year, the military policy of this Government has been: (1) generally, to give top priority to measures aimed at dealing with that crisis; (2) specifically, to improve the ability of the NATO Alliance to respond to less-than-total aggressions with less-than-total force, thus raising the threshold that would lead to general nuclear war.

b. Although this Government, from the President on down and in many different forms, has repeatedly pointed out that its current stress on conventional strength for NATO does not imply abandonment,

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(2)
(1)

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but rather reinforcement, of the deterrent. some of its Allies remain unconvinced. [REDACTED] 1,364(5)

4. [REDACTED]

It has become increasingly clear during the past few weeks that the following elements represent a hard position on which [REDACTED] have decided to stick:

5. Pacification [REDACTED]

a. The position of this Government is logical and clear. Several excellent messages from Washington to the field have furnished policy guidance to its ambassadors and senior military officers, but the resistance, almost amounting to mistrust, continues among certain of our Allies. [REDACTED]

b. [REDACTED] additionally, have been gravely suspicious of the current intentions of this Government in the field of potential negotiations with the Soviet Union, and this undoubtedly colors their approach to NATO strategic considerations.

c. The President has reassured [REDACTED] on negotiations; if this doesn't "take", nothing will. For reassurance on strategic considerations, however, there is one man whose judgment would mean even more [REDACTED] to any tangential NATO malcontents) than that of the President: General Norstad.

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[REDACTED]

d. The NATO nations have grown to trust Norstad because they feel he is one of them, not an advocate of some American policy. Just a few days ago [redacted] told Norstad that [redacted] would consider modifying their position only if Norstad personally and formally stated that he would go along with Stikker's proposed formulation which is acceptable to U.S. and indicated that he believed either that NREMI's not necessary or that subject of no great urgency."

1.3(a)(5)

e. Norstad naturally did not respond to this feeler [redacted] but indicated later to his political advisor that, "if asked, he must reaffirm his view that NREMI's are necessary . . . At same time, he would qualify this statement by saying he understands MAC will shortly be considering this matter and that meanwhile it should not be permitted to hold up action on other important problems."

6. Recommendation

That the President designate one man to go to Paris and persuade General Norstad that the interests of NATO as well as of this Government will be best served if he exercises his great influence to secure agreement within NATO on the NATO military policy of this Government.

a. Maybe the book says Finletter, but the facts indicate Norstad.

b. Maybe an order would do the job, but persuasion would be far more productive of convincing response.

c. The man selected should (ideally):

(1) Enjoy the full confidence of the President.

(2) Enjoy the full confidence of Norstad, as nearly as can be determined.

(3) Believe fully in the NATO military policy of this Government, as nearly as can be determined.

Lawrence J. Legere, Jr.
Colonel, U.S. Army

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